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and the idiot wind

idiotwind

All have the same eyes
the eyes of mind
that immobilize in pattern
the pattern; a natural smother
rarely broken through
for a breath outside
the outside; the symbol of difference
and all are in awe
if the pattern should colour
for all see black and white
and for the breathers
and the painters
who show nothing but themselves
Make the mind in pattern eyeless.

- Denise Santarossa

Futility

She hobbles down the garden path
Eyes and body showing signs
Of heavy lids, of hoplessness,
Of all the pleasure of the past.

She runs across an elfin man.
Sitting under ivy tree.
He offers her the bright champagne.
It will restore the spring of life.

She hesitates and bows her head.
With grey hair falling all around,
Her dark eyes rest upon her hands.
She wonders if, she wonders why.

Reflects on her days gone by,
Her victories are balanced with
The many lessons to be learned
Of living with a losing world.

But even though the chance has come
To wisely live her life again,
She sees no use since she's aware
Of endless flaws of human-kind.

- Susan Mielke -

Yesterday was, Today IS

She is precious, fragile, naive
Like a china doll upon a shelf
To be seen and not heard,
a toy or decoration for someone else.

A word is spoken out of place,
looks of disapproval suffocate her.
She is ashamed, humiliated,
forced to return to her place on the shelf.

She must struggle and try again.
A little louder this time it came,
like a replay, the same reaction.
She was stronger, they did not break her.

She was slow, one step ahead two steps back.
They began to look, they began to see.
They were forced to listen, forced to hear.
She stood up straight, held her head high.

She is moving up and onward.
She has suffered , and felt loss.
She must be strong, make her protests
and never give in until she has conquered.

- Janet Junkins -

Go slow
     on whatever wings you dare

So many,
     heating on blind refrains
drop lost,
unrealizing all the pomp and circumstance
     (that so well becomes them)

to dawn,
to don
what's left (and right) of truth
becoming wise men's bias (to a letter)
     un god man's past

- Howard Sagar -

the difference
between yesterday and tomorrow
i learned today

i learned as i watched, and felt, my friends
put knives in each other's backs,
and steal from each other, with greed
and hatred in their eyes,
as i expected from others only what i gave
myself, and never got it

the difference
between yesterday and tomorrow
is this, in me.
yesterday i tried to live.
i expressed my feelings of love
and supressed my feelings of dislike.
i loved to be good at things,
and loved more to be told so.
i had respect, and expected it.
i gave admiration, and got it in return.

i loved.....

tomorrow i will not live, but exist.
i will smile when i am expected to.
i will express no feelings that make me
vulnerable.

i will cast off vanity.
i will lead everyone to believe they
have my respect.

i will cry.....

life yesterday made me too
vulnerable
my heart was too frequently and deeply hurt.
but,
existance tomorrow will disguise me.
my deeply hurt heart will bleed alone.

because they have won
and I am lost..

- Laura Wallis

Happily Ever After

She awaited
    prince charming on a white charger
he is nothing
has no charm.
    his kiss
    woke her from her sleep
    gave her life.
he takes her soul
piece by piece,
and destroys it.
    he stole her heart
he stabs her heart
with dull blows
neverending.
    took her to live in his castle
keeps her in his poverty
with "his" children
    her dreams were fulfilled
she is content?
she has to be!
to survive
    and they lived happily ever after
he sits
away
a drink in his hand
no thoughts of her
in his head
in his heart....

--Susan Mielke

Can You Conquer a Dragon?

I saw him standing
head bowed over
virile hands
A clammy rain fell
and spattered on leaves
He looked up
and took my hand

Walking home,
I pondered his truths
and as we reached
the stoop
He pulled me over
for his kiss

My childhood world
lived deep in those kisses
Quivering damsels in
distress
rescued by
knights slaying dragons
who all lived happily
ever after

But suddenly a dragon
came
One that you could
not conquer
In the form of a face
with twelve leering
eyes.
He roared,
And I was alone.

- Alison Bradshaw

POWERLESS AFTER HURT

Light for a sunflower
the power
you have over me

my eyes
flooded with disillusion,
yours, blinded to mind.

my tears
drop unseen,
drowned out by your pride.

my heart
torn and terrified
from your distant glare.

my hands
searching for comfort
cut on your visible barricade.

me
withering in the shadow
where once you made light.

- Susan Mielke

The Coral and The Crab

Transfixed in their own world, the lifeless
creatures sleep:
A being which inhabits the palm size
porous castle.
Like a dried up sponge it collects the flesh
that touches it
The castle resembles short reaching
tenticles,
Each one branched off and those branched
off too,
Yet these tenticles are'nt slender and smooth,
but porous, grindy and thick.

The creatures' life isn't full of riches
or knowledge;
They are still babies, but are surrounded
by dingy gold and smokey pea green.
The gold isn't young, bright and lovely but
dark and mustardy,
and the castle emits a strong high
salty scent, a touch of fish.
It has the smell of the Pacific
where it was found.

The creatures are young and are
laid in their spaced
quarters between the tenticles.
Each creature is as long as a medium sized pin,
and as wide as a violet petal;
They burn the colour of hot spicey
orange and poppy red.
Their hands resemble a clamshell or a
shark's jaw,
Each jaw or snapper bigger than the oval
body itself.
Rich tomatoe tones are added by the
creatures to their gloomy homes.

Not every creature is as fortunate:
Some are comfortably lying in their
graves, in the chalky, ivory coloured base.
These are the beigy gold tones, the ones
which are dried out;
They have no plastic shine to them
Nor do they have a smooth, silken skin.
They lie amoung the shelled cacoons.

What are we talking about?
It could be many things.
What is the creature and the castle?
The crab is the creature and the coral is
the castle.
Together these dead things might
have memories of being golden and shiny.
Maybe they didn't know each other
til their death.

Yet they resemble each other;
One reason might be that they
knew they would lose their phosphoresent glow!
Yet they do not seem sad.
Beneath the torched colour and the
bent shape,
There is a life living beyond our imagination.
The saucy crab and the worm out coral need each other
to survive,

- Drina Jolic

The Piano

The cold autumn winds blew restlessly outside, sending leaves swirling around in the crisp air. Jennie sat at the piano, and as she played, each note rang the quiet emptiness of the rustic country house. The squeaking of the hall banister signalled that Grandma was coming downstairs for breakfast, late as usual. Jennie got up and walked to the bottom of the stairs to meet her.

"Not much of a Saturday morning," Grandma said.

"We're getting nearer to winter every day," shouted Jennie's mother from the kitchen. "Come and get something warm inside you."

Grandma ushered Jennie into the kitchen where father sat hidden in a newspaper.Mother worked busily at the cupboard, and Scott, Jennie's brother, was reading a hockey magazine.

They sat down and ordered their breakfasts. Grandma looked around the room like a caged tiger. "What about that trip to McCulloch beach we all planned on having?" she asked.

Suddenly all was quiet. Father slowly peered over the top of his newspaper."That was before the Arctic conditions set in. You aren't serious?"

"Oh , you're not going to let old man winter's premature arrival stop you , are you?" Grandma continued, "Well I'm going , who's with me?"she announced.

Mother continued her short-order cook imitation, seeming not to notice Grandma or her plans. Scott, who'd never paid any attention to the conversation anyway, showed no signs of excitement. Father looked at Grandma, then at Jennie, took one glance out the window and then returned to his paper , still shaking his head in disbelief. Grandma and Jennie looked at one another, The last survivors of the "count-me-out " list. Jennie nodded her head in excitement, bringing a big smile to the face of her elder.

"You can't take my car," shrieked mother over the sound of her frying eggs. "I've got to go shopping."

"I'm going downtown in mine," finally accepting that the excursion was for real.

So the only mode of transportation left to the two

was bicycling. Pretty soon they were out in the garage rumaging around for the kids' bicycles. When at last they were found, and Grandma had made a lunch for the two, they were off.

The leaves on the trees, or what was left of them, were beautiful shades of red and gold. As the two travelled along the beautifully scenic two-lane roads, a feeling of tranquility settled over Jennie. She laughed and talked with Grandma as they only did before when Grandma listened to Jennie play the piano. Jennie was an excellent piano player, but the family joked and kidded that Grandma was the real piano player in the family. Occasionally, she would sit down and play, but the nimbleness that once made her a young player, with the same capabilities as Jennie, now was gone. Her arthritis left her suitable only for sing-a-long piano playing. Her days of performing music by Bach and Beethoven were long gone. She nevertheless, gained great pleasure from listening to Jennie perform, perhaps remembering the days of her prowess at the keyboard.

As the two bicycle riders steered down the dirt path to McCullock's beach, nothing mattered less than the weather. They leaned their bicycles against picnic tables intended for use in warmer conditions. Jennie shivered as she looked out at the dark, murky, cold water. The clouds were grey, and as the sun peered between them, it appeared that they were almost silver. A silvery line of colouring was sent across the water. The wind created great waves that came crashing to shore. It blew the tall grass that grew back from the beach back and forth, and bent all the trees around the lake as far back as their branches would permit them to go. As Jennie looked out onto the beauty of this fall scene, she was startled to look over and see Grandma in her bathing suit.

"Well come on, I brought your bathing suit", she said.

"I'm just about frozen to death in this coat", Jennie replied. "I think I'll pass on this one,Grandma."

"Okay, But you don't know what you're missing," said Grandma. With that, she walked to the edge of the water, stuck her toe in as a showing of defiance to the temperature of the water, and proceeded to walk, step by step, into the lake. The wind caused Jennie's teeth

to clatter and no matter how she tried to stop ther, she couldn't. She saw Grandra get about waist high in water and then she lay back on the sand and thought about Grandma, the coming of winter, and whether or not she should enter the piano competition her teacher had told her about.

The fireplace burned bright and, more importantly to Jennie, warm. As she rubbed her hands in front of it and got thawed out, she heard Grandma in the living room, playing the piano. She had trouble playing the song Jennie had mastered years ago. It struck Jennie as sad that someone who had once been so good at playing the piano, now fumbled at the keys, trying to play a simple song. She knew this would be a good time to ask Grandma her opinion of Jennie entering the piano competition. She entered the room and Grandma, who was looking sadly at the keys, looked up and smiled at her. "Are you warm now", she said.

"Oh yes", Jennie replied. She looked around the room, not really knowing how to go about asking the question. "Grandma, did you ever enter any piano competitions when you were my age?" she asked.

"Oh my yes", she replied. "Why my teacher entered me in all the competitions she could find."

They both chuckled and then Jennie asked, "Do you think I should enter one."

"Do you know of one", Grandma inquired.

"Oh yes," Jennie said. She was happy to see Grandma approved of such events.

"Well, then enter in it," Grandma stated. "Jennie, if there's one thing I've learned out of all the years of my life, it's do whatever you get a chance to do. Don't hold back. Live life to the fullest. Only the Lord knows life is short enough without worrying about whether or not to enter piano competitions. And good luck to you child."

The consent of her parents was given. She phoned her teacher and told her of the good news. Jennie was surprised to find that she would be competing the next day at the town's Legion Hall. She practiced all evening, and after saying good-night to everyone, she ascended the stairs to her bedroom. She had trouble getting to sleep and was surprised one could be nervous so long before

one played in a competition.

The hall light was flicked on. Jennie could tell because the light shone through the space between her door and wall. She rolled over onto her side. Her parents voices could be heard in the hall, but Jennie was too tired to pay attention to what they were saying. Something about "let the children sleep." But then she heard her Grandma. What would she be doing up at this hour she wondered?

Sunday was pretty much the same as Saturday had been, so Jennie was understandably distressed when she rolled over and looked out her window. She felt lazy until she remembered the voice she heard that night. She sprang out of bed and ran to her parent's room. There was no one there. There was no one in her brother's or Grandma's room either. As she walked downstairs she pondered the reasons for the strange disappearance of everyone. The sound of steps on the porch reached her ears. In an instant she reached the doorknob, and swung the door open. Her parents care in and both of their faces, struck Jennie as unusual. The words didn't seem to want to leave Jennie's mouth.

"Where were you, where's Grandma, Scott?" she gasped

"Jennie dear, we don't know how to tell you this," her mother said, as she looked at her father. "We had to take Grandma to the hospital, something about her heart."

The news hit Jennie. She seered drugged as she stumbled into the kitchen and sat down. Her parents saw the effect of the news and made futile attempts to get her mind off it by reminding her of the piano competition in which she was to play in half an hour. Telling her that the hospital was to phone the minute anything happened didn't help at all either. Feeling it was best for her to get away from the thoughts of Grandma at the hospital, her parents got her music and persuaded her to go to the competition.

As she waited to play she thought of all the great times they'd spent together. She found it hard to believe that someone who was so alive and well just a day ago could have problems so soon afterwards. She heard her name called and walked over to the piano. The music was set up in front of her and she stared up at it. Her fingers started to touch the keys. She got a few bars into her piece and then it became almost completely un-

important to her. She stopped, but then, remembering the people watching her, she tried to continue. Each time she played a note, she thought more of the fun they'd had together. Each time she looked at the music she felt her heart weigh more and more. Then, it struck her. What was she doing here? She got up and ran out of the hall. She kept on running all the way to her house. There she learned that Grandma had died. The tears couldn't be held back anymore, and she broke down and cried. Her parents tried to hold her but she went right into the living room. The piano sat there in the room. Jennie couldn't look at it without remembering the times Grandma had talked, laughed and joked, while Jennie played. She walked over to the piano and sat down on the bench. Her tears were now hitting the keys like heavy rain on a cottage roof. But she played the piano, maybe in memory of Grandma, and there had never been a more deserving recipient of the music, because Grandma, was the real piano player in the family.

—Andrew Lynch

She told me
that in an unknown
state of mind
whether empty
or in a restless battle
between love and hate
You put yourself to an endless sleep
Waiting for the shadows of death to sweep

- Denise Santarossa -

EDGES

The first dead rays of the morning sun
Piercing through the choked sky
Casting a feeble glow
Over the awakening city

Harsh outlines of icy concrete
Preparing for another eternal day
Of suuffering and defeat

Emotionless faces...
Lonely souls shuffling
Through the dust and grit
Never hesitating
Never stumbling
Programmed flawlessly

A sudden wind
Blasting along the broken street
Waving the few battered, lifeless trees
Not forceful enough
To sweep away a fabricated world

- Don Mertens -

In the shadows of the cities' corners
Women in revolt protest, counting up their dollars
Underneath the neon lights
Of the arcade, the pool hall, or sidewalk cafe.
See the people go by. The flash of a shiny shoe,
The gleam of Brylcream in some young punk's hair
Clash
With the aroma of Arames that all the boys now wear.

You sit there eating ice cream.
Smile your plastic smile as you listen to our screams.
You finger your cheap black wallet
And smooth a strand of hair in place.
You talk of machos, prophets, and surrealists
While Dali silently paints
The Face of his wife.

Cycles in the night roar past the crowded bars.
The same canned people make the same propositions
In underground cattle cars. Rapists contemplate
the movie ads and pop art drawn
Upon the cities' walls.
You laugh and throw your cards away
Leaving chance to ones less fortunate.

- Renata Borg -

Dawn, a mere mockery of hope,
relieving the stars of their dreams.

It watches and waits for the
chance to rip veils from the eyes of night,
and from their astral grip on man.

Laughing at me, the break of day
sits hard on the valley's top and rots
the lands of fantasy.

The greed of the sun holds reality away.
Only evening can gaze to the planets
and all that is to view.

When this life of yours does end
by the cold blade of time, breathe deeply
the sweet scent of twilight.

- Colan Mitchell-

DUSK

Cruel eyes, for tired tears
Electric cries of empty time
Forbidding those who come so near
Ever wasting, while nearing prime

Broken heart, so many times
Never bending all the way
Half-heard notes and empty rhymes
There is nothing you can do or say

Rituals and blackened thorns
Clinging vines of memories
Sheep's protection, thinner shorn
No coat for winter's freeze

Tainted river water
Slips silently 'neath hanging trees
Dangling vines slowly eddy
Awaiting winter's freeze

Time hangs
Suspended from a gnarled limb
Watching patiently
For nothing
At all

- Dave Geldart -

One with the depth of breath,
yours is to lead

Searching for endless caress
of tomorrow conc••ved.

And no disgrace in tune
with thoughts believed.

Ability mourns when
hope's deceived.

With all moments touched
and one river crossed.

Advanced vision cast,
a clearer sight perc••ved.

- Colan Mitchell -

As the sun rose in the icy sky, pink rays were shot thru the dirty, frost-emblazoned window. She lay on the deshievelled bed, like a broken doll. Dusty beams of light slanted across the room and fell in shattered folds on the worn blankets. It was cold in the small, one room apartment, so cold that small clouds of fog formed around the mouths and nostrils of the sleepers. The sun glanced across her closed eyes. She stirred, woke, lit a cigarette and blew a trail of wispy smoke which curled upward around the single light fixture.

She had a dainty, oval face, with large violet eyes and cut glass lips stained a delicate rose colour, as if porcelain. Her hair tumbled from brow to shoulders in a cascade of golden-red down. The ethereal almost timeless quality of her was in almost rude contrast to the rough large shape of the man lying next to her. She rose and dressed. By now the skies were clouding over, the brilliance of dawn had dulled to a murky, opaque, grey morning. She left the apartment, gently closing the door behind her, fearful for the faintest stir within. The streets were empty. She had nowhere in particular to go, it was too early to go home, not at this hour anyway. She suddenly became concious of her empty hands. She had left her purse behind her, but she dared not go back. She merely wandered along the streets dreaming-

James had seemed so happy with her, she had thought their days together had been rosy and full of promises. He had loved her, she was sure of it. She remembered the day they met-she had been selling roses in the street and had decided to wander thru one of the side-walk cafes. He had been sitting at a little table, alone, a glass of champagne in his hand, a look of deplorable lonliness in his eye. He had bought all of her roses, the whole basket and he passed her the bills from a fat, well stuffed wallet. She smiled as she remembered the picture-him sitting there, impeccably dressed, with several dozen drooping roses in his arms. Then the twinkle in his eye as he called her back, sat her down, and pressed the flowers in her hands. "Dine with me" was all he said-such a beautiful day-such a moment, never another. It had only been the beginning. Theirs had been like any other typical fairytale romance-but to her, the dream of a lifetime. He bought

her emeralds--for he felt diamonds too cliche, and a silk dress. He had revelled in her innocent, simple charm and had shown her off to all his friends,--his little flower girl. And she had tried to please him, as best she could, the only way she felt she could, as well as she knew how.

By now it was midday. She had reached the boarding house where she lived--more often behind in her rent than on time--and had climbed the black iron stairs at the back of the house up to her tiny room. She had never brought him here, she had been too ashamed. The dresses were carefully wrapped in tissue between her mattressed, the jewelry had been carefully sewn into the back of the head of an ancient rag doll, saved from her childhood, that she kept on her bed. And on her dresser, in large tin cans, were many bunches of beautiful dried flowers--they had been alive once, and so had she....He had taken her dancing, many times. She had discovered how she loved to dance. They had danced in the same clubs where she used to stand by the door with her wicker basket, selling flowers to the rich, exotic women that had filed by her like brilliantly plumaged birds.

Once, when she and James had been sitting at a table crowded with personalities both famous and rich, the discussion had turned to street people. And then, one man, breathing heavily on his cigar, had interrupted the conversation with a bored yawn--"Has anyone, by chance, seen what's happened to that little rose girl who always used to hang about this place? -- I used to see her all the time--such a pretty little thing--she was probably knocked up by some drunk, poor girl!" James had smiled at her, and squeezed her hand, and she had smiled back, but as she did, she suddenly caught her reflection in one of the mirrors behind his head, on the far wall, and froze. She didn't recognize the powdered, painted face that had gazed back at her, the magnificent fur around her neck, the dazzling jewels. She didn't know how to react or what even to feel: pity, happiness, sorrow?

And then one day James had gone. She remembered standing outside the gates of his house, face pressed against the bars, staring at the closed up house, the beautiful place where she herself had lived for

those happy months...how quickly the maid had hustled her out and closed the doors in her face. James had been nowhere to be seen, and no one had answered her questions--his car was gone. A month later, the house was put up for sale.

She started a little and found herself in a small, steamy bar. Again? How she had gotten here, she didn't know, but she knew, from habit now, what she had done. The man guzzling cheap liquor next to her, hand on her thigh, told the story. She followed him out, into a car, and after a while found herself in another dreary apartment. She lay on a hard bed, shivering, as yet another strange man lay beside her. She had not seen his face yet--she turned, ashamed no longer, and looked full into his face.

Then he was trying to make love to her, revelling in his animalistic desires, but she was not aware of it, for she was staring, transfixed, into his eyes--such deep blue eyes, such pools, that were growing larger and larger, until the blueness swallowed her up and she was standing on a glasslike floor of the deepest cerelean blue, alone, in white silk, dancing slowly, moving, as if in a dream....

--Renata Borg

Still,
a painted smile
against the wall
stroked by gentle fingers
stared at by admiring eyes
your look undying
grief, a world unknown
for a heart of cloth
your colours
never turning shades of winter.
a hand made mind,
not of mirrors and glass,
no reflection for all to see.
All is nothing
they could pin your heart
but only the culprits bleed.

- Denise Santarossa

We rode
Bob's horses
Crazingly
As if nothing really mattered
And nothing really did

And the horses -
gleaming Silver and White steeds
screamed
in seering agony
against vapourous tongues of yellow flames
cast iron bars
grated, ripped bulging flesh
sinew
straining to remain
Forever manacled to turmoil

- Howard Sagar

Reflections

I stare onto my walls sometimes
When I am angry
And see flames of fire
Upon a black background,
An image of Satan dancing
Luring souls into his
Eternal world of hell.
I stare at my wall often
When I am puzzled
And see the devil in heaven
Or a world where eerie noises
Sound after death
Or nothing.
I stare at my wall frequently
When I am happy
And see the gates of heaven open,
Angels playing sweet music
Offering flowers.
I stare at my wall occasionally
When I am content
And see a green reindeer
With velvet-smooth skin, like peachfuzz,
Soft, moving ears and tail.
Boot-like feet, sad eyes.

--Dennis Pasquali

I remember Saturday nights
when just before Hockey Night in Canada
it was bathtime
When pulling out the flannel pyjamas
from the middle drawer and flying
downstairs and up again
into the bubbles and porcelain
     (almost forgetting to take off one sock)
          the routine that wasn't at all
lying back
     the water inches along my head
     gradually freeing my hair from gravity
for dancing
     touching my ears-and then in
          (the magic beginning)
     then tickling my temples
     quick-
          close (my engulfed in hot liquid) eyes
my nose remains
like some periscope sputtering above sea level
     -silver at the edges
as my eyes search diligently for nessie-in-the-blurs
but my belly weakens
and my head and feet rise
in unison

my kitten now lies
across my tired belly
and cleans my wrists of perspiration
Joni Mitchell floods my ears
and yet my eyes crease slightly
Hegina mellow
and twitching moss of grey
     -head on my arm-
curls her feet under
and hugs my wrist
     like a little woman
And for the moment our diaphrams
inhale in unison

- Howard Sagar

Why is she waiting?
the window holds nothing,
but a reflection
of her own emptiness.
Her third cup of tea,
sipping slowly,
not knowing that
the cup will empty
before she hears a knock.
She sees nothing now
through the breath touched glass,
and dark's return
will even take the nothing away.
Made blind by the dark,
left blind by hope.

- Denise Santarossa -

Asylum Warfare

I am alone,
In blank silence,
Like a sullen mansion amid a still forest,
Leaves that take no breaths,
Winds that blow, but do not touch;
I am myself within myself.

Through mired glass I peer into blackness
and void;
What is that dark image I see?
What clothes does he don?
It's coming to me armed with delusion.
Go away, morbid shadow!
What stuff is in you, I wish I knew,--
Your silhouette haunts the house of my mind;
It creeps in unremitting solitude.
My hands are flowing with ink,
But I cannot read the writing,
An endless stream of oddities
Winding into a tapestry around my thoughts.

I cannot escape,
My strides are echoed by soft quicksteps,
I am losing...
My windows are frosted,
Winter's settling in
But my house wears no shutters.
Where can I go, where can I hide?
There is no shelter.
Time is tumbling through stairways in space
Tossing me towards treks I would not venture...
I am lost.

Shelter has found me;
The surroundings are flat and simple
And though the air is quelled
I sense shades of indifference in the
Whiteness of the walls,
But I am at peace;
Yet, when my name is called,
I must respond.

--Gabe Deleuterio

painter's breather's